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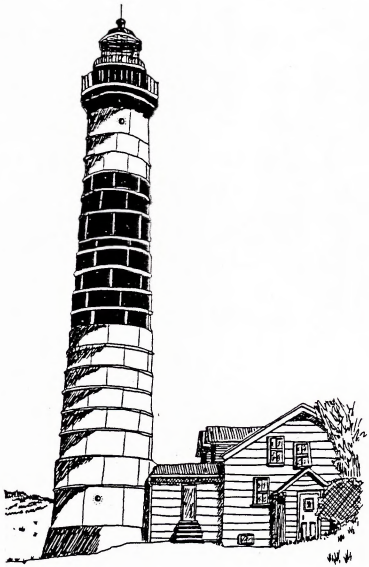
April 1997

Michigan

Draft Resource Management Plan Amendment/Environmental Assessment: Disposal of U.S. Coast Guard Lighthouse Properties



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BLM Mission

It is the mission of the Bureau of Land Management to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

Front Cover-Big Sable Point Lighthouse, Mason County

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Milwaukee District Office
P. O. Box 631
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53201-0631

IN REPLY REFER TO:

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2370

April 16, 1997

Dear Reviewer:

The Great Lakes lighthouses are a National treasure that have served mariners for over a century under the management of the U.S. Coast Guard. They helped shape and develop the Lake States' economies and played an important role in America's westward expansion. These historic and scenic structures are prized for their link to the past and every effort must be taken to help preserve them for generations to come. Now that technology has rendered the lighthouses obsolete for navigational purposes, the U.S. Coast Guard is returning some of the towers and surrounding lands to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for further disposition. This Draft Resource Management Plan Amendment/Environmental Assessment (RMPA/EA) is a critical step toward finding the proper long-term managers for the lighthouse properties.

Enclosed for your review and comment is the Draft RMPA/EA for the Disposal of U.S. Coast Guard Lighthouses. The Draft RMPA/EA outlines the proposed action and alternatives for the long-term management of seven parcels withdrawn for lighthouse purposes. Under the proposed action, BLM will transfer the lighthouses and surrounding lands to other Federal and State agencies and nonprofit organizations.

I appreciate your past involvement in this planning process and encourage your continued participation. Comments received on this Draft RMPA/EA will be considered in the preparation of the final plan. Written comments should be sent to the following address, postmarked no later than May 16, 1997:

Bureau of Land Management
Milwaukee District Office
Attn: Howard Levine
P.O. Box 631
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53201-0631

If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to call Howard Levine, Planning and Environmental Coordinator, at (414) 297-4463.

Sincerely,

James W. Dryden

James W. Dryden
District Manager

Enclosure

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Executive Summary

Lighthouses in the Great Lakes are a National resource treasured for their historic, cultural and scenic values. They have been called "America's Castles" because they represent our heritage and need protection, often through local volunteer efforts. The lands surrounding the lighthouses, too, merit special attention because they provide important habitats for the hundreds of animal, bird and plant species which rely on the Great Lakes ecosystem for their survival.

Technological changes over the past 25 years have made the lighthouses obsolete from a navigational standpoint. The agency in charge of maintaining and operating the lighthouses—the U.S. Coast Guard—has determined that it no longer requires some Great Lakes lighthouses and/or the lands surrounding them to carry out its mission. In accordance with Federal law, the Coast Guard has relinquished the properties back to the Bureau of Land Management. This Resource Management Plan Amendment/Environmental Assessment (RMPA/EA) decides how the lighthouses and lands will be managed, by whom, and how to protect the historic, cultural and natural resources found in the vicinity of the properties.

The BLM is required to accept back into the public domain any lands that have been withdrawn for other Federal purposes and which have not been substantially changed in character. BLM is authorized to manage the lands suitable for return to the public domain or it can convey the lands to another entity in accordance with an approved land use plan. BLM's current plan for Michigan does not address lands which became public domain after the plan's approval in 1985.

The RMPA/EA addresses seven parcels withdrawn for lighthouse purposes for the U.S. Coast Guard. Most of these parcels have historic lighthouse structures that are managed by non-profit groups under licenses issued by the Coast Guard. In addition, the parcels are surrounded by other publicly-owned lands.

BLM's Milwaukee District Office began the RMP amendment in March 1996 by publishing a notice in the Federal Register and in several newspapers in Michigan. That notice solicited comments and suggestions from the public for the long-term management of the lighthouses and surrounding lands.

Based on the recommendations from the public and BLM policies for land management in the Eastern States region, two planning issues were developed: how to maintain the historic lighthouse structures in good repair and protect surrounding lands, and assuming the BLM does not retain the lighthouses, which entity or entities should receive the lands.

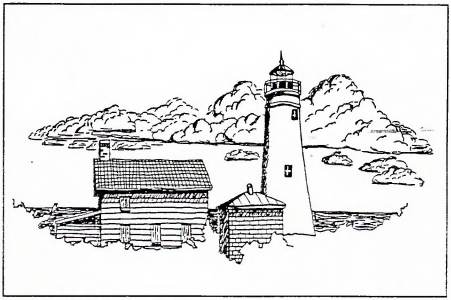
The RMPA/EA analyzes the impacts of transferring the lands and lighthouses to other Federal and State agencies, or non-profit organizations. It also evaluates impacts of two alternatives: retaining the lands under active BLM management, and leasing the lands to other entities, but with continued BLM ownership.

The RMPA/EA was developed in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. These laws govern how BLM conducts multiple-use land use planning and how to balance trade-offs between competing uses.

The proposed action is to transfer the lands to State agencies and non-profit groups through the Recreation and Public Purposes Act of 1926 or to other Federal agencies by issuing new withdrawals under FLPMA Section 204. General impacts to environmental and historic resources are discussed in the environmental assessment following the RMPA.

Michigan Resource Management Plan Amendment

I. Purpose and Need



Thunder Bay Lighthouse, Alpena County

In 1985 the Bureau of Land Management, Milwaukee District Office (BLM, MDO) published the Michigan Resource Management Plan (Planning Analysis-Category I) for the management of lands and minerals in the State of Michigan. The primary issue for the management of surface public lands at that time dealt with hundreds of small islands located in the Great Lakes and on inland lakes and rivers. Since that time, Congress passed legislation in 1988 which transferred most of the lands considered public domain to the State of Michigan, local governments and private individuals.

Because the Michigan Resource Management Plan (RMP) was approved in 1985, it did not address parcels which have since become public domain, such as withdrawals under the jurisdiction of other Federal agencies. The parcels remain under the jurisdiction of the individual agencies for as long as they are needed. Occasionally, agencies determine that the withdrawals are no longer required for a Federal purpose and are relinquished back to the BLM. Lands changed in character are considered unsuitable for return to the public domain and are referred to the General Services Administration (GSA) for disposal. Other tracts of land, considered suitable for return to the public domain, can be managed by the BLM, withdrawn for use by another Federal agency, transferred to a State or local government agency, or sold to private individuals or not-for-profit groups.

Before BLM can dispose public domain lands, however, the lands must first be identified through the land use planning process (Sec. 202, Federal Land Policy and Management Act). The plan must explicitly identify the lands being considered for disposal under BLM's statutory authorities. In the case of lands withdrawn for other Federal agencies, BLM had no knowledge of future relinquishments during the time it was developing the Michigan RMP and therefore could not analyze the suitability of individual tracts for transfer out of BLM administration. This RMP amendment will,

therefore, identify and assess individual tracts of lands that will become part of the public domain.

II. Planning Issues and Decisions

BLM published a Notice of Intent to prepare the Michigan Lighthouse Planning Analysis/ Environmental Assessment in the Federal Register on February 14, 1996. Notices were also published in seven newspapers in Michigan to inform local, interested people of BLM's plan. The public was invited to participate in the planning effort by submitting comments and suggestions on the long-term disposition of the lighthouse withdrawals. The public comment period ended on March 14, 1996. In addition, BLM sent out over 60 letters to local governments, state political leaders, Michigan's congressional delegation, local lighthouse keepers associations, conservation groups and historical societies, Federal agencies, and the media. To date, the BLM, Milwaukee District Office has received over 50 comment letters and telephone calls from these interested parties.

This scoping effort raised two issues:
1.) Protection of the historic lighthouse structures and surrounding lands; and
2.) Suggestions about which entity or entities should receive the lands. For example, whether BLM should retain the parcels or transfer them to other entities.

This RMP Amendment/Environmental Assessment will decide whether relinquished withdrawals will be transferred out of BLM ownership and will set criteria regarding which entity will receive the lands.

Currently, BLM has seven applications for relinquishment on file from the U.S. Coast Guard in the State of Michigan. It is expected that the Coast Guard will relinquish additional parcels in the future, but the locations of these sites are unknown at this time. All but one of the applications currently on file have been determined to be suitable for return to the public domain (BLM may be able to directly transfer the lighthouse at Passage Island to Isle Royale National Park based on the enabling law which designated the park. BLM has requested a Department of Interior solicitor's opinion to determine if this is possible).

[The Notice of Intent identified eleven (11) parcels to be addressed in the plan. Since that time, however, one parcel—Eagle Harbor—has been determined unsuitable for return to the public domain; BLM is seeking concurrence from GSA in this determination. Manitou Island Lighthouse will be transferred to the National Park Service under the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore enabling act. Two other sites—Whitefish Point and Presque Isle—will be transferred by BLM under authority granted by Public Law 104-208, passed by Congress on September 30, 1996.]

As required by Section 203 of FLPMA, this plan amendment identifies tracts of public domain which are suitable for disposal under the Recreation and Public Purposes (R+PP) Act of 1926. It should be noted that this plan is general in nature and any decision to transfer lands out of BLM administration will be contingent on further, site-specific analysis. At the time of site specific review, BLM will evaluate each tract against a set of criteria identified in Section III below.

Furthermore, no parcel will leave BLM's administration without appropriate protective

measures in the form of covenants or easements, or additional consultations and reviews required by Federal law. These measures will apply to lands transferred to Federal and non-Federal entities.

III. Disposal Criteria

Public domain land managed by the BLM will remain under its jurisdiction unless, as a result of land use planning it is determined that disposal will serve the national interest (FLPMA, Section 102(a)(1)). The Michigan RMP authorized disposal of BLM's surface tracts, but did not specify particular parcels as required by FLPMA, Section 203(a) and 43 CFR 2741.5(e). As part of the RMP amendment process, BLM reviewed previously-approved disposal criteria, current laws and policies, and information gathered during scoping to determine which tracts should be transferred from BLM's jurisdiction, and under what circumstances the transfers should occur.

This RMP amendment adopts, in its entirety, the lands disposal decision from the 1985 Michigan RMP, which reads:

1. Plan Decision
All BLM surface tracts are categorized for disposal and will be evaluated on a tract-by-tract basis against the criteria in Appendix A [from the Michigan RMP]. Appendix A describes surface disposal options and criteria. Where possible, the preferred method of disposal will be by transfer to another public agency or non-profit body. Where site-specific analysis reveals no interest by another public or non-profit body, BLM tracts may be offered through sale or exchange to private body. Tracts will be retained under BLM administration only where management and no other public or non-profit body is available or willing to assume jurisdiction. Management of retained tracts will be custodial. Preference for sale or transfer may be readjusted based on policy changes, as well as on site-specific analysis. If additional BLM surface tracts are revealed in the future, they will also be evaluated and categorized for disposal, through the RMP amendment process.

2. Implementation
The following actions will be necessary to implement this alternative:

a. Subsequent to plan approval, each tract (or related groups of tracts) will be evaluated for an on-site inspection and evaluation of renewable resource values and uses, resolution of occupancy or title conflict situations if any, and potential transfer or sale. Sale terms and deed restrictions, if necessary, will reference applicable local or State land use requirements.

b. Any unauthorized use (occupancy), Color-of-Title or title conflict situation will have to be resolved prior to any other implementing action.

c. A land report will be prepared for each tract to present findings and recommend a preferred transfer option. The various transfer options available include:

(1) Recreation and Public Purposes Act lease or sale;
(2) Withdrawal on behalf of another Federal agency;
(3) Exchange between another Federal agency and a third party (private, State or local government);
(4) Color-of-Title patent claimants who satisfy the requirements of the Color-of-Title Acts; and

(5) Sale (under Sec. 203, FLPMA).

e. A site-specific environmental analysis will be prepared for each tract (or related groups of tracts) to evaluate the potential effects of the preferred transfer option and reasonable alternatives. Copies of the environmental analyses will be made available to interested parties on a request basis.

f. Prior to any transfer, a Notice of Realty Action will be published in the Federal Register and general circulation newspapers to provide public notice and opportunity to comment on the action.

Appendix A from the Michigan RMP reads, in pertinent part:

Lands with the following characteristics will be sold, exchanged or transferred in the public interest:

A. Disposal and Retention Criteria
1. Lands of limited or no public value.

2. Widely scattered parcels which are difficult or uneconomical for BLM to manage with anything beyond custodial administration.

3. Lands with high public values proper for management by other Federal agencies, or State or local government.

4. Lands which will serve important public objectives as provided in FLPMA Sec. 203(a)(3).

5. Lands which are not required for specific public purposes.

6. Lands where disposal would increase the range of economic opportunities provided to the general public.

7. Lands in which the highest value or most appropriate long-term use is agriculture, or commercial or industrial development.

8. Lands without legal public access.

B. Retention
1. Areas where disposal of the surface would unnecessarily interfere with the logical development of the mineral estate, e.g., surface minerals, coal, phosphate, known geologic structures, etc.

2. Public lands withdrawn by BLM or another Federal agency for which the purpose of the withdrawal remains valid.

Additional Disposal Criteria
In addition to the criteria identified above, the following criteria amend those in the Michigan RMP and will be applied when determining which entity will acquire the parcels identified in Table 2 on page EA-3:

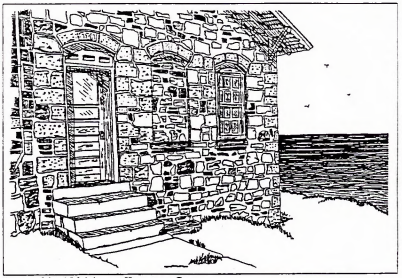
1. Priority will be given to the primary public land owner adjacent to the parcels. Tracts adjacent to Federal land or needed for a specific Federal purpose may be re-withdrawn under FLPMA Section 204. Tracts adjacent to state land may be transferred to the State of Michigan. Parcels transferred to the State or non-profit groups will be classified under the R+PP Act.

2. If no Federal, State or local public agency or non-profit group is interested in acquiring the properties, the parcels may be offered for public sale under FLPMA, Section 203 (43 U.S.C. 1711 *et seq.*) for Fair Market Value, based on the highest and best use of the land. An appraisal conducted by

BLM will determine the FMV.

3. Where parcels have historic lighthouse structures and existing leases from lighthouse preservation groups to manage the buildings, BLM will encourage the proposed land owner to continue these management arrangements after the lands are transferred. Conveyance instruments for these sites will contain provisions that ensure that the historic buildings continue to receive protection under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended of 1966 (NHPA).

4. All applicable Federal, State and local laws, plans and policies will be followed with respect to protection of threatened and endangered wildlife and plant species, historic preservation, Native American religious concerns, hazardous materials, and archaeological resource protection. Patents issued under the R+PP Act will contain specific language that maintains full protection under the NHPA. All consultations and reviews required by law will be conducted when BLM prepares the site-specific environmental assessments.



Passage Island Lighthouse, Keweenaw County

Future processing of withdrawal revocations will utilize these criteria.

IV. Relationship to Other Plans, Programs and Policies

This plan amends the Michigan RMP prepared in 1985. The RMP called for the disposal of all surface tracts of public domain in the State of Michigan. This RMP amendment also conforms with BLM-Eastern States manual supplement 1611.2 issued June 26, 1996, which defines the planning process for lands in the Milwaukee District.

The following section discusses plans, programs and policies of other Federal, State and local government agencies and the relationship these documents have to this RMP amendment.

USDA, Forest Service

The USDA, Forest Service manages four National Forests (NF) in the State of Michigan: Huron-Manistee in Lower Michigan and Hiawatha and Ottawa in the Upper Peninsula. Of these, only the Manistee NF neighbors any of the public lands covered by this RMP amendment. The Manistee NF is managed primarily for its timber and recreational resource potential, although some mineral development occurs. Big Sable Point Lighthouse is located two miles south of the National Forest and is surrounded by Ludington State Park.

The Forest Service's management prescriptions for two areas near the Big Sable Point Lighthouse emphasize natural resources. The Manistee River is managed under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act according to Management Prescription 8.1 of the Huron-Manistee Land and Resource Management Plan, approved in 1987. The Nordhouse Dunes/Sensibar Tract is managed as wilderness according to Management Prescription 5.1. (J. DiMaio, pers. comm., USDA, Forest Service)

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

One of the subject parcels—Thunder Bay Island—is currently being managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under license from the Coast Guard. The island is considered part of the Michigan Islands National Wildlife Refuge, which is under the administrative jurisdiction of the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). The Shiawassee encompasses 9,000 acres in central lower Michigan. The Service conducts periodic resource inventories at Thunder Bay, including bird counts in the early summer. There are no plans by the Service to develop the island for tourism or backcountry activities (D. Spencer, pers. comm.).

National Park Service

The Park Service operates two units of the National Parks System which neighbor the parcels affected by the plan amendment—Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore (Point Betsie Lighthouse) and Isle Royale National Park (Passage Island Lighthouse). During the suitability determination phase for Point Betsie, the Park Service commented that a land transfer to the Nature Conservancy would be acceptable and would not adversely affect the Park's management program. The RMP amendment proposes to transfer Passage Island to the Park Service and would, therefore, not affect Park management.

Tribal Lands

The following Tribal Lands are located in the vicinity of two of the lighthouse properties:

Grand Traverse Indian Reservation, Leelanau County
Keweenaw Bay Indian Reservation, Keweenaw County
Ontonagon Indian Reservation, Ontonagon County

Municipal and County Governments

The parcels affected by the RMP amendment are located in five of Michigan's counties. An assessment of the impacts to counties and localities of transferring the lands will be conducted during the site-specific EAs.

V. Consistency with Plans of the State of Michigan

The RMP amendment is consistent with the plans of the State of Michigan, including the Michigan Coastal Management Program/Final Environmental Impact Statement (MCMP) prepared in 1978. The

MCMP was jointly prepared by the Michigan DNR and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

The CZMP sets out the goals and objectives for the management of the coastal zone of Michigan, in conformance with Section 306 of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1451 *et seq.*). Because BLM was not a cooperating agency on the MCMP, the plan cannot be adopted and used as a final BLM plan. We will, however, incorporate by reference the MCMP sections that pertain to the affected environment. The MCMP is available from the Michigan Coastal Management Program, P.O. Box 30028, Lansing, Michigan 48909.

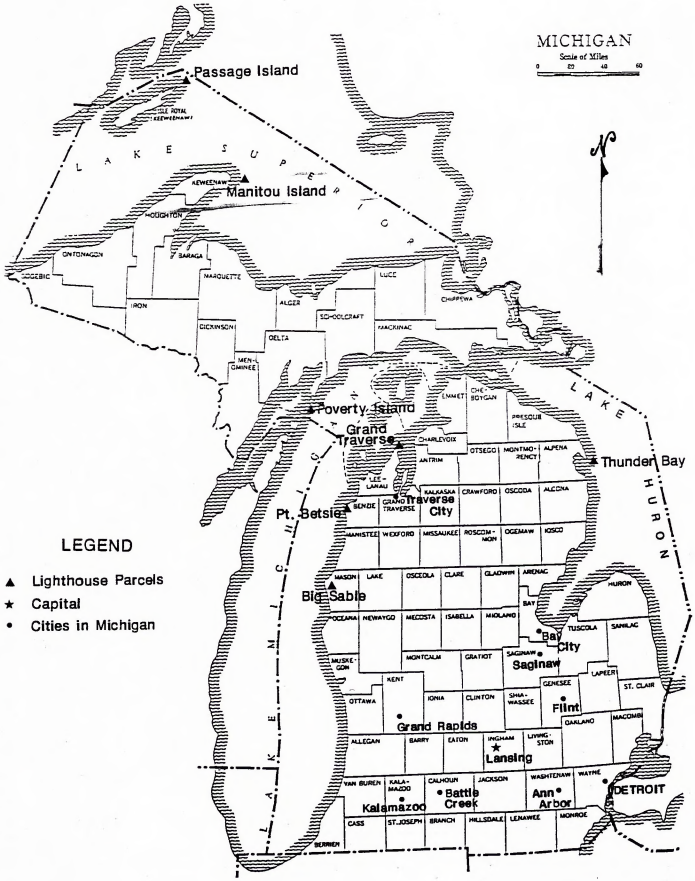
During the preparation of the Michigan RMP in 1985, BLM conducted a governor's consistency review in accordance with Section 202 of FLPMA and 43 CFR 1610.3-2. The Department of Natural Resources, which responded on behalf of the Governor, endorsed the proposed action and requested that BLM clarify several points before approving the final plan. The State's comments were incorporated into the approved plan and made no additional comments.

Prior to approving this RMP amendment, BLM will conduct another governor's consistency review. Any comments forthcoming from the Governor will be considered and changes will be incorporated into the final RMP amendment.

VI. Plan Decision

All tracts identified on Table 2 (EA-3) will be transferred out of BLM administration based on the criteria described Section III above. Final decisions regarding the specific recipients of these lands will be deferred to site-specific environmental assessments prepared under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. The environmental assessment, which follows this RMP amendment, describes the affected resources and general environmental impacts of the proposed action and alternatives to it.

Relinquished Lighthouse Parcels in Michigan



I. INTRODUCTION

Need for the Proposed Action

The Resource Management Plan Amendment/Environmental Assessment (RMPA/EA) authorizes the disposal of certain public domain tracts in the State of Michigan. These lands are currently withdrawn from the public domain for use by the U.S. Coast Guard for lighthouse purposes (See Planning Area map following this page). The Coast Guard has determined that the lands and lighthouses no longer serve a Federal purpose and have notified the Bureau of Land Management of its intent to relinquish the parcels. BLM has determined that the lands are suitable for return to the public domain.

The Michigan Resource Management Plan (RMP) of 1985 authorized disposal of BLM's surface tracts in the state, but did not specify individual tracts for sale or transfer. The RMP amendment authorizes sales of public domain lands based on land use planning, as required by Section 203(a) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1713).

Conformance with Land Use Plan

The RMP amendment clarifies the intent of the Michigan RMP by identifying specific tracts for disposal and potential recipients of the lands. The RMP called for the disposal of all surface tracts of public domain in the State of Michigan based on the following criteria:

1. lands having limited or no public value;
2. parcels that are difficult or uneconomical for BLM to manage; and
3. lands that are not required for specific public purposes.

This RMP amendment is in conformance with State Director (BLM Manual 1611.2) guidance issued on June 26, 1996, which defines the planning process for lands in the Milwaukee District.

Relationship to Statutes, Regulations or Other Plans

Sections 202 and 203 of FLPMA require that BLM identify tracts for disposal in land use planning and assess the environmental impacts of conveying the lands out of BLM ownership. The RMP amendment identifies seven (7) parcels that have been relinquished by the U.S. Coast Guard. General environmental impacts of conveyance are considered in this EA; site-specific impacts will be analyzed in individual EAs for each parcel.

The RMP amendment is consistent with the Michigan Coastal Management Program/Final Environmental Impact Statement (MCMP), which was prepared jointly by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and Michigan DNR. The MCMP sets out the goals and objectives for the management of the coastal zone of Michigan, in conformance with Section 306 of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1451 *et seq.*).

Because BLM was not a cooperating agency on the MCMP, the plan cannot be adopted and used as a final BLM plan. The MCMP is incorporated by reference where appropriate.

The proposed action is also in conformance with the following laws of the State of Michigan:

- Shorelands Protection and Management Act (Public Act 245, 1970);
- Inland Lakes and Streams Act (PA 346, 1972);
- Great Lakes Submerged Lands Act (PA 247, 1955);
- Sand Dunes Protection Act (PA 222, 1976, as amended by PA 146 and 147 of 1989);
- Great Lakes Underwater Salvage and Preserve Act (PA 452, 1988);
- Goemaere-Anderson Wetland Protection Act (PA 203, 1979); and
- Natural Resources and Protection Act (PA 451, 1994).

II. PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

Proposed Action

The proposed action, when approved, will authorize transfer of the parcels identified on Table 1 below:

It is BLM's intent to transfer the lands and lighthouses to the most appropriate governmental or non-governmental entity. BLM will review R+PP development and management plans and withdrawal applications carefully to ensure that they maintain the historical and natural resource values found on the properties. It is not BLM's intent, however, to limit these agencies' authority by constraining how the parcels will be managed. Every effort will be made to work with applicants during the review process to develop mutually beneficial and effective management programs.

Table 2 identifies the tracts proposed for disposal, potential recipients and the existing permittees for the lighthouse parcels in the State of Michigan. Final decisions regarding land transfers and permitting arrangements will be based on discussions and environmental assessments for each tract.

Property Name	Legal Description (all Michigan Meridian)	Acreage
Big Sable Point	Sec. 7, T.19N., R.18W.	57
Grand Traverse	Lots 2 & 3, Sec. 6, T.32N., R.10W.	13
Manitou Island (2 parcels)	Sec. 15; and Secs. 17, 20, 21, T.58N., R.26W.	569 (land) +67 (land+buildings)
Passage Island	Sec. 18, T.67N., R.32W.	6
Point Betsie	Lot 5, Sec. 4, T.26N., R.16W.	1.5 (land only)
Poverty Island	Secs. 8 & 9, T.36N., R.19W.	98
Thunder Bay	Sec. 3, T.30N., R.10E.; Lot 5, Sec. 33, Fract. Sec. 34, T.31N., R.10E.	57

Table 1. Parcels Proposed for Transfer

Parcel	Proposed Transferee (Special Area Designation)	Existing or Proposed Permittee
Big Sable Point	Michigan DNR (Ludington State Park)	Big Sable Lighthouse Keepers Assoc.
Grand Traverse	Michigan DNR (Leelanau SP)	Grand Traverse Lighthouse Foundation
Manitou Island[1]	Michigan DNR (Copper Country State Forest)	None (land)
Manitou Island[2]	Michigan DNR (Copper Country SF)	North Woods Conservancy (lighthouse)
Passage Island	NPS (Isle Royale National Park)	None
Point Betsie[3]	The Nature Conservancy	The Nature Conservancy (land)
Poverty Island	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service/Michigan DNR	None
Thunder Bay	USFWS (Michigan Islands NWR)	None

Table 2. Michigan Public Domain Lands Transfer Matrix

[1/] Secs. 17, 20 & 21, T. 58N., R.26W. (MIES-019212), [2/] Sec. 15, T.58N., R.26W. (MIES-002777), [3/] Relinquishment is for land only; Coast Guard will retain buildings.

Procedural Issues Common to all Transfers

Under the proposed action, BLM may transfer jurisdiction of public domain parcels under one or more of the following disposal authorities:

- Recreation and Public Purposes Act of 1926 transfers;
- FLPMA, Section 204 withdrawals for other Federal agencies; and
- FLPMA, Section 203 sales.

The following discussion describes the procedures required to prior to transferring the lands under these statutory authorities.

The lands will remain under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Coast Guard until BLM conducts site-specific analyses for each parcel and publishes public land orders revoking the lighthouse withdrawals. As part of the environmental assessment process and prior to conveyance, BLM will conduct all applicable consultations under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531). As part of the environmental assessment and prior to conveyance BLM will also coordinate with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources concerning the presence of state-listed species.

BLM will also conduct consultations in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470), and the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 (42 U.S.C. 1996). In addition, BLM will not accept any lands back into the public domain until all hazardous materials clearances are completed under the Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) of 1980, as amended (42 U.S.C. 9615). Furthermore, should the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office identify potential cultural resources requiring site assessments, the lands will remain under the jurisdiction of the Coast Guard until those assessments are completed.

In meeting Bureau responsibilities for management, acquisition and disposal of public lands, it is Bureau policy to avoid short- and long-term adverse impacts to

wetlands. It is Bureau policy to retain wetlands/riparian areas under BLM administration unless:

1) Federal, State, public and private institutions, and parties have demonstrated the ability to maintain, restore and protect wetlands on a continuous basis; or
2) transfer of public lands, minerals, and subsurface estates is mandated by legislation or Presidential order.

R+PP Act Transfers (Sales)

Transfers made under the R+PP Act have the following general procedural requirements:

- Proponent applies for land for any recreational or public purpose. Applications may be filed by the State, other Federal agencies, counties and municipalities and non-profit corporations or associations (43 CFR 2741.2);
- Proponent prepares a management and development plan which describes how the land will be managed (43 CFR 2741.4(b)). BLM approves development plan;
- BLM publishes a Notice of Realty Action in the Federal Register and local newspapers which gives the public an opportunity to comment on the proposal (43 CFR 2741.5(h)(1)); and
- BLM approves application and issues patent (43 CFR 2741.9).

Withdrawals

Section 204 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1714) authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to withdraw public domain lands from operation under the public land laws. Lands may be withdrawn for use by other Department of Interior bureaus or other Federal agencies.

BLM follows the procedures in 43 CFR 2310 *et seq.* for lands being transferred to other Federal agencies. In general, the regulations at 43 CFR 2310.1 require that agencies consult with BLM to determine:
1.) the need for a withdrawal;
2.) the extent to which the lands must be segregated; and
3.) which, if any, studies, public meetings and negotiations should be scheduled to determine environmental impacts and to inform the public about the proposed withdrawal.

Department of the Interior bureaus, such as National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, must first petition the Secretary of the Interior to gain departmental approval prior to filing a withdrawal application with the BLM (43 CFR 2310.1-3). BLM then processes the withdrawal applications according to 43 CFR 2310.3 *et seq.* The final action is publication of a public land order in the Federal Register.

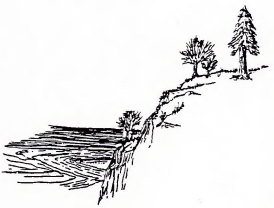
To date, BLM has received withdrawal petitions from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for withdrawals at Poverty and Thunder Bay Islands.

Public Sales

Although it is BLM's policy that its lands in Michigan remain in public ownership, some parcels may be offered for sale to private groups or individuals if no public sector agency is willing to assume ownership. Land sales are authorized by FLPMA,

Section 203 and 43 CFR 2711 *et seq.* BLM will notify the public of the tracts available for sale in the Federal Register and local newspapers. The tracts may be offered for direct sale, or modified or open competitive bidding. Prior to the decision to offer for sale any tract BLM will prepare an environmental assessment. All applicable reviews and consultations will be conducted prior to sale of the tracts.

Alternative One - Retain/Active Management
Under this alternative, BLM would expand its management responsibilities to cover lighthouse management. Management, maintenance, and operation of the properties would be performed by BLM. Individual project plans would be prepared for each site to analyze management, budgetary and activity actions that would be required for the management of the properties.



Alternative Two - R&PP Lease
Under this alternative, BLM would issue leases to other entities, such as the State, local governments, not-for-profit groups or private concessionaires to manage the lighthouses and surrounding lands. BLM would continue to be responsible and liable for human health and safety and upkeep of the structures in the event of lessee non-compliance with lease terms.

Under the R+PP Act and 43 CFR 2741.6, leased land may be patented after five years, if it is determined that it is in the national interest that the lands be sold.

III. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

As previously stated, the lands affected by the RMP amendment are scattered along the coasts of the Upper and northern Lower Peninsulas of the State of Michigan. Given the large spatial scope of the plan and the fact that the lighthouse properties are discrete parcels, any discussion of the affected environment must be general in nature. This section will describe environmental and socio-economic resources found in the region, in order to provide a context for the impact assessment that follows.

General Description
The Great Lakes basin is a large and diverse region. It has been undergone tremendous population growth, extensive industrialization, and severe environmental stresses over the past two hundred years. The natural diversity of plants and animals are important on a regional, national and global scale. The region is also vital to the economies of the United States and Canada. The lighthouses themselves are found on valuable lands and in important ecological habitats.

The seven parcels affected by this RMP amendment are located along the shores of three of the five Great Lakes: Huron, Michigan and Superior. The entire Great Lakes ecosystem spans 95,000 square miles and is home to nearly 35 million people in the United States and Canada (Interagency Ecosystem Management Task Force: 74).

The lakes hold 95 percent of the surface water in the U.S., fifty percent of which is in Lake Superior.

The Great Lakes basin was formed over several glacial epochs beginning 500,000 years ago and ending with the retreat of the Wisconsinan glaciers around 9,500 years ago (Nature Conservancy: 10). As the glaciers retreated they left behind boulders, small till, a fine dust called "flour," and the lake themselves. Several geomorphological structures can be seen today as a result of the glaciers: beach ridges, alluvial and outwash fans consisting of loose material, sand dunes and lakeplains (ibid, 11).

Subsequent to the glaciers' retreat, coniferous forests grew up in the north and oak savannas and prairies to the south. Gradually oak and pine forests replaced the fir and spruce in the northern portion of the basin. Much of the region was logged over during the 19th and early 20th centuries (ibid: 26). Today, the area contains coniferous/mixed deciduous forests, which support a significant paper industry (Interagency Ecosystem Management Task Force: 77, Michigan Society of Planning Officials: 10).

The uplands surrounding each of the Great Lakes have unique features. Superior, is ringed by forests because the soils are ill-suited to agriculture and the climate is cool. Huron is mainly forested in the north, but the southern portion does support agriculture and an urban population in Southeastern Michigan. Adjacent to Lake Michigan are extensive dunes, notably at Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore and Ludington State Park (Nature Conservancy: 10-13).

Piping Plover
Julie Zickenfoose, illustration

Coastal Zone

Michigan's coasts have the following geomorphic shore types (NOAA: 22-29):

ERODIBLE BLUFFS: These comprise 26 percent of the shoreline. The bluffs are highly unstable as they are composed of unconsolidated sand and gravel. Erodible bluffs are susceptible to erosion from wave action.

NONERODIBLE BLUFFS: This shoreland type is extremely stable because it is usually composed of bedrock or rock rubble. Most erodible bluffs are found in the Upper Peninsula.

LOW PLAINS: This is the most common shoreline feature on Michigan's coasts. Usually only a few feet above lake level, low plains are composed of clay, loose sand, and exposed bedrock.

WETLANDS: While the definition of wetlands varies according to jurisdiction, they can be generally defined as areas where the water table is at or close to the land surface. A detailed discussion of this important ecological feature is found in the section on wetlands and riparian areas.

SAND DUNES: Found mostly along Lake Michigan, dunes are unstable, windblown formations which lie inland from the shore. These dunes may extend inland several hundred yards and reach 400 feet in height.

They are well drained and partially covered by grasses. Dunes are highly erodible and serve as groundwater recharge zones.

Pitcher's Thistle
Courtesy of David Kopitzke

The following ecological systems are found in the planning area (Nature Conservancy: 11):

OPEN LAKE: This includes both the inshore and offshore waters of the Great Lakes. LAKEPLAIN: These former lake bottoms contain alternating layers of fine- and coarse-grained sediments which were left behind after the retreat of the glaciers. Water tables are often high under lakeplains. Several globally significant plant species are found only in the Great Lakes basin lakeplains, including Acorn Ram's Horn, Michigan Monkey-Flower, and Grass-leaved Goldenrod (ibid: 20-23). The area also supports many of the best remaining populations of the prairie white-fringed orchid (*Platanthera leucophaea*) (ibid: 17).

COASTAL MARSH: These unique wetlands are greatly influenced by lake processes such as major level fluctuations, severe wave action and wind tides (Herdendorf, 1992 as cited in The Nature Conservancy: 11).

Coastal marshes support a large number and diversity of resident and migratory bird species. The number of globally significant species supported by coastal marshes is relatively few. Upland areas furnish a source of nutrients and organic material which are stored and cycled in the aquatic food web of coastal marshes. The highly productive marshes provide habitat for many fish species during some portion of their life cycle and provide feeding and staging areas for large numbers of migratory birds.

COASTAL SHORE: The coastal shorelines, and the ecological communities they support, are dominated by the effects of the Great Lakes. Wind, wave action, hydrology, temperature and humidity influence the ability of species and communities to survive in this dynamic environment. The coastal shore system supports nearly 30 percent of the globally significant species and communities which occur entirely or partially within the Great Lakes basin. Globally significant species associated with coastal shorelines include the dwarf lake iris and the ram's head lady's slipper. The coastal zone performs the key ecological process of buffering uplands from the forces of wind and wave action.

These shore types and ecological systems provide habitat, recreational opportunities, and the economic basis on local, regional, national and, in some cases, global levels.

The Great Lakes contain nearly twenty percent of all freshwater in the world (Nature Conservancy: 1). The Conservancy has identified 131 globally significant species and habitats (elements) in the region (ibid: 14). Several of these elements are found on the properties affected by the RMP amendment.

Figure 1 describes the critical elements present in the planning area as required by BLM Manual Section H-1790-1. Detailed analyses will be addressed in site-specific EAs.

Threatened and Endangered/Special Status Species

Many threatened, endangered and special status wildlife and plants species are found in the planning area (Nature Conservancy: 20-23 Interagency Ecosystem Management Task Force: 78). According to the Task Force, an estimated three million waterfowl migrate through the Great Lakes along the Atlantic and Mississippi flyways. Although it is likely that the tracts within the planning area contain habitats which contain these breeding and feeding grounds, specific information and analysis regarding each will be deferred to the site-specific EAs.

Critical Elements	Present			Affected		
	Yes	No	Possible	Yes	No	Possible
Air Quality	X				X	
ACECs		X			X	
Coastal Zone	X					X
Cultural Resources	X				X	
Native American Religious Concerns			X			X
Prime/Unique Farmlands		X			X	
Floodplains	X				X	
T and E Species	X				X	
Hazardous/ Solid Waste Materials		X			X	
Water Quality		X			X	
Wetlands/ Riparian Areas	X					X
Wild and Scenic Rivers		X			X	
Wilderness		X			X	

Figure 1. Critical Elements of the Human Environment.

Generally, the following threatened and endangered, and State-listed species are found within the affected area:

Plants

Species	Common Name	Status
Adlumia fungosa	climbing fumitory	5
Arenaria macrophylla	sandwort	4
Calypso bulbosa	calypso	4
Carex concinna	beauty sedge	5
Carex atratiformis	sedge	4
Carex richardsonii	sedge	5
Carex scirpoidea	bull rush sedge	4
Castilleja septentrionalis	pale Indian paintbrush	4
Cirsium pitcheri	pitcher's thistle	2, 4
Crategus douglasii	hawthorn	5
Cypripedium arietium	Ram's head lady's slipper	5
Draba arabisans	rock whitlow grass	4
Draba glabella	smooth whitlow-grass	4
Draba incana	twisted whitlowgrass	4
Drosera anglica	english sundew	5
Dryopteris expansa	expanded woodfern	5
Dryopteris filix-mas	male fern	4
Empetrum nigrum	black crowberry	4
Iris lacustris	dwarf lake iris	2, 4
Lazula parviflora	small-flowered woodrush	4
Lycopodium selago	fir club moss	5
Oplopanax horridus	devil's club	4
Orobance fasciculata	clustered broomrape	4
Osmorhiza depauperata	sweet cicely	5
Pinguicula vulgaris	butterwort	5
Polygonum viviparum	alpine bistort	4
Tanaeetum huronese	Lake Huron tansey	4
Trichostema brachatum	false pennyroyal	4
Viburnum edule	squashberry	4
Viola epipsila	northern marsh violet	4

Animals

Species	Common Name	Status
Haliaeetus leucocephalus	bald eagle	2, 4
Sterna caspia	caspian tern	5
Sterna hirundo	common tern	4
Charadrius melodus	piping plover	2

Status

1 - Federally Endangered 2 - Federally Threatened
3 - State Endangered 4 - State Threatened 5 - State Special Concern

Wetlands/Riparian Resources

The following wetland communities occur within the planning area (MDNR: 1-4). The number and extent of wetlands on the lighthouse properties will be identified when the site-specific EAs are prepared. Wetland acreage is not expected to be extensive.

Great Lakes Marsh - multi-seral non-forested wetland directly influenced by and connected to a large freshwater lake.

Northern Wet Meadow - a grass and sedge dominated wetland.

Intermittent Wetland - an herb or herb-shrub dominated wetland along lakeshores or in depressions. Influenced by fluctuating water levels seasonally and from year to year.

Interdunal Wetland - a rush. sedge and shrub dominated wetland situated in depressions of open dunes along large freshwater lakes. Influenced by fluctuating water table seasonally and yearly partly in synchrony with lake level changes.

Bog - a peatland characterized by sedge or sedge-sphagnum floating mat and/or deep sphagnum peat dominated by *Sphagnum* and low shrubs (Heath family).

Wooded dune and swale complex - a complex of forest and marsh alternating sand ridges and interdunal troughs along the shores of the Great Lakes. Narrow bands of dry forest vegetation alternate with and are sharply delineated from adjacent wet meadow or swamp forest.

Native American Religious Concerns

No Native American religious concerns were raised during the suitability determination phase and scoping for the RMP amendment. BLM will consult with tribes during the environmental assessments for each parcel in accordance with the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 (42 U.S.C. 1996).

Cultural Resources

Most of the relinquished public domain parcels have structures on them, some of which have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Figure 2 shows the listed structures and the year they were listed on the NRHP:

Parcel	Year State-Listed
Big Sable Point	1988
Grand Traverse	1991
Manitou Island (2)	Yes
Passage Island	No
Point Betsie	1969
Poverty Island	No
Thunder Bay	Yes

Figure 2. Properties Listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Socioeconomics

The Great Lakes basin supports a binational population of over 35 million people and considerable industry (Interagency Ecosystem Management Task Force: 77). The affected public domain tracts, however, are located in rural Michigan, which is noted for its scenic, recreational, and commercial and sportfishing activities. Throughout the Great Lakes region, commercial and sportfishing support an estimated $4.5 billion in total economic activity.

The properties affected by the RMP amendment are located in small, rural and semi-rural counties. Table 3 contains populations and basic economic data for the counties in which the lighthouses are located.

County	Population (1993)	Total Personal Income ($1,000's)	Major Industries
Alpena	30,900	512,309	State & local government, manufacturing, services
Benzie	12,900	221,377	Services, retail trade, state & local government
Delta	38,600	633,763	Manufacturing, and state and local government
Keweenaw	1,800	28,281	Services, manufacturing, and state and local government
Leelanau	17,800	354,887	Services, manufacturing, retail trade, construction
Mason	26,700	435,982	Manufacturing, services, state and local government

Table 3. Population and Economic Data for Affected Counties

Sources: Michigan Regional Economic Information System, Bureau of Economic Analysis and Regional Economic Information Service, University of Virginia; NEMCOG (1995), CUPPAD (1995). TPI includes income from all sources.

A sizable, though unquantifiable, portion of this activity is attributable to Michigan's northern Lower Peninsula and Upper Peninsula. Local and regional economic impacts will be discussed in the EAs prepared for each parcel.

Travel, tourism and outdoor recreation are multi-billion dollar industries in the region. Because of their proximity to large urban areas, the lighthouses are popular tourist attractions, though it is unlikely that any of them are destinations unto themselves (E. Mahoney, pers. comm.). More likely, the lighthouses add an allure to existing local and regional tourist amenities.

Visitor use at each of the sites varies from nil at the undeveloped, inaccessible tracts to several thousand per year at Grand Traverse and Big Sable Point. These visitors add various amounts of money to the local economies, although this figure is unknown.

Reasonable Foreseeable Future Development

It is difficult to forecast at this point the type of development which may occur after the lands are transferred out of BLM ownership. It has already determined that no significant impacts will be caused by transferring the lands and lighthouses from the Coast Guard to BLM. (See individual EAs prepared during suitability determination phase, available from BLM, Milwaukee District Office.)

Any subsequent transfers will be allowed only if the properties are protected for the preservation of historic and environmental values. Future development will largely be limited to repairs to existing structures and stabilization of surrounding lands (e.g., beach erosion mitigation projects). More intensive projects may be undertaken in the future if it is determined they will not cause significant impacts. Specific development proposals will be analyzed in the individual environmental assessments after BLM

receives R+PP Act applications and withdrawal petitions for each parcel.

IV. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Impacts of the Proposed Action

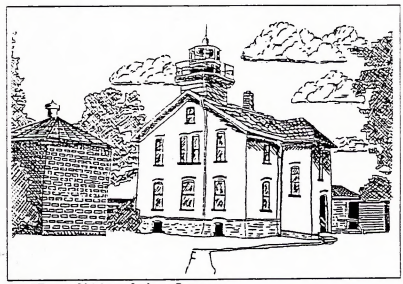
The proposed action, described in Section II of the RMP amendment, will result in the transfer of all lighthouse properties from Coast Guard jurisdiction to other Federal, State and local agencies and not-for-profit groups. Transfer will be executed after BLM receives and reviews applications and development plans for the long-term management of the parcels and prepares EAs for each parcel. Although it is unknown at this time exactly how the sites will be managed, general impacts will be addressed in the following sections.

Coastal Zone

Although the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended, requires that all Federal programs and plans be consistent, to the extent possible, with State Coastal Zone Management programs, Federal lands themselves are statutorily excluded from the coastal zone (16 U.S.C. 1453(1)). However, the proposed action has been determined to be consistent with the Michigan CZMP based on the fact that no substantive change will occur in the management of the properties as result of the proposed action. [The State of Michigan will have the opportunity to review this finding during the governor's consistency review prior to approval of the RMP amendment.]

Mitigation has been built into the proposed action in the form of protective stipulations over changing the use, construction of new facilities, roads and other ancillary structures, and demolition of existing structures (unless they pose a human health and safety hazard).

Many of the lighthouse and associated structures are over one-hundred years old and have had extensive repairs on them since they were built. For example, since 1941 the lighthouse station at Big Sable Point has undergone numerous improvements to the tower. In addition, the Coast Guard and citizen groups have conducted shore stabilization projects on the surrounding lands. Although these activities created short-term environmental impacts, such as non-point sedimentation run-off, indirect shore erosion impacts away from the site, and noise impacts at the Ludington State Park campground, they ultimately saved the historic structure from destruction by the wave action of Lake Michigan.



Grand Traverse Lighthouse, Leelanau County

In addition, if the parcels are transferred to long-term owners, the structures will likely be improved to accommodate increased numbers of tourists, thereby causing increases in traffic, parking needs, larger septic systems, and other visitor services. The level of impacts to the structures and surrounding lands will be assessed in the EAs associated with the R+PP applications.

Dwarf Lake Iris
David Kopitzke, illustration

Cultural Resources

In preparing the suitability determinations for each notice of relinquishment, BLM received letters from the State Historic Preservation Officer. These letters noted which of the properties had known or probable cultural resources and whether additional site investigations should be conducted prior to future surface disturbing activities. Because it is unknown at this point what these activities will entail, it is impossible to quantify what, if any, losses to cultural resources will occur.

A background investigation of withdrawn lighthouse properties was conducted in accordance with sections 106 and 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (NHPA) and section 14 of the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (ARPA). This investigation was designed to determine if any historic properties listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) were known within the tracts. During this research, BLM reviewed correspondence from the Michigan State Historic Preservation Officer and requested information on listed or eligible properties from the current SHPO. Appendix 2 lists the lighthouses in the reviewed group that are listed in the NRHP and those tracts that are likely to be eligible.

BLM's analysis and comments by the Michigan SHPO staff have confirmed that although no systematic archaeological survey has taken place on the Coast Guard tracts, because of their locations, there is a high probability of locating both historic and prehistoric archaeological sites on the tracts.

Prior to transferring these tracts out of Federal ownership, BLM, in consultation with the SHPO, will identify all historic and prehistoric resources eligible for listing in the NRHP and institute appropriate protection measures for those properties.

Native American Religious Concerns

In accordance with the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1979, Archaeological Resources Protection Act and the 1992 amendments to the NHPA, the Coast Guard or the BLM will assure that appropriate consultation with Native American tribal groups is complete. These consultations will demonstrate that the tribal representatives have been given sufficient opportunity to assess whether the proposed action could affect traditional use or religiously significant areas, access, or prevent future use. It will also give tribal representatives an opportunity to suggest potential solutions to any of their concerns.

Threatened and Endangered Species

Implementation of the proposed action will result in no additional loss of habitat for threatened and endangered plant and wildlife species beyond what would be expected from current Coast Guard management. Management of these parcels is expected to be essentially similar as BLM regardless of whether they are managed by other Federal, state, local agencies or non-governmental organizations.

Implementation of the proposed action could benefit State and/or Federal threatened and endangered species through active management to conserve the species.

Wetlands/Riparian Resources

Implementation of the Proposed Action is not expected to result in negative impacts to wetlands or in the loss of wetland acreage. It is expected that wetlands will be maintained and protected regardless of whether they are managed by a Federal, State or local agency, or a non-governmental organization.

Socioeconomics

From a macro-economic standpoint, the proposed action will have an infinitesimal economic impact on the State of Michigan and Great Lakes region as a whole. Local economic impacts may be larger, however, as long-term, permanent ownership of the lighthouse parcels and their lessees may result in more aggressive management of the properties. Examples of such management include improvements to tourist facilities, infrastructure, and other management activities.

Because the nature and extent of these activities are unknown, it is impossible to determine the economic impacts of the proposed action at this point.

The permanent removal of these properties from the local tax bases will result in a loss of several hundred dollars per year in revenue for all sites. Tax revenue data specific to each county will be described in subsequent EAs. Sales tax revenues will increase by a moderate, but unknown, amount.

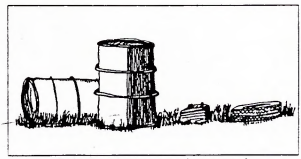
Personal income taxes from construction, rehabilitation and visitor services will add revenues to local, State and Federal tax bases. This will be discussed in the site-specific EAs.

An informal survey of county extension agents, planning departments and economic development organizations revealed strong support for the proposed action. Although there has been no comprehensive analysis of the impact of tourism on rural Michigan, most of those interviewed opined that the economic impact of transferring the properties to State and Federal agencies and local lighthouse keepers' organizations would result in a net benefit to the counties.

While some interviewees conceded that the lighthouses would not in themselves attract sole purpose trips, they would add another tourist amenity to their respective counties. All those interviewed believed the continued loss of property tax revenue would be "minimal," and would likely be offset by increased sales tax revenues and possibly additional jobs.

Other Resources

In addition to the resources described above, BLM's planning regulations require a discussion of access, mineral resources and hazardous material management and issues. These issues will be discussed in the site-specific EAs prepared for each property.



Federal regulations require the removal of all hazardous wastes before lands are accepted back into the public domain.

Impacts of Alternative One

Under this alternative BLM would retain the parcels and have an active role in the planning, development and management of the lighthouses. BLM could issue leases to other parties to manage the structures and/or lands. Because BLM does not usually manage historical structures, further planning and environmental analysis will be required to develop a program for the management of the parcels.

Impacts to cultural, threatened and endangered wildlife and plant species, and wetland resources and socio-economics would depend on what type of management BLM undertakes as a result of further planning. BLM is bound by the same laws as the Coast Guard and other Federal agencies and impacts to these resources are not expected to any different. Therefore, the impacts of this alternative would be the same as the proposed action.

If BLM retains the parcels, there would be a decrease in State and local tax revenues because Milwaukee-based BLM employees and not local residents would manage the properties. On-site management and occasional visits would add some revenue to local businesses and governments.

Impacts of Alternative Two

Under this alternative, the parcels will remain under BLM ownership but the active management will be transferred to the state agencies, local governments or private not-for-profit groups under the R+PP Act leases. Impacts will be similar to those found under the proposed action. If, in the future, BLM discovers that any of the properties are not being managed according the approved management and development plans which accompany R+PP Act applications, the lands will return to BLM jurisdiction.

Impacts under this alternative will be similar to those of the proposed action and alternative one.

Mitigation Measures

No additional mitigation measures in addition to those found in the proposed action are required to protect environmental resources.

Residual Impacts

There will be no residual impacts caused by the proposed action.

LIST OF PREPARERS

This Resource Management Plan Amendment was the collaboration of many individuals within the Milwaukee District and Eastern States Offices. The following people had significant involvement in the development of the plan in addition to that of the planning and environmental coordinator:

Milwaukee District Office
- Larry Johnson, Realty Specialist
- Sylvia Jordan, Natural Resource Specialist
- H. Singh Ahuja, Physical Scientist
- LaRoye Chisley, Cartographic Technician

Eastern States Office
- Ed Ruda, Realty Specialist
- Sarah Bridges, Cultural Resource Specialist
- Ken Fitzpatrick, Economist
- Geoffrey Walsh, Wildlife Biologist

BLM would also like to thank the Wisconsin Bureau of Endangered Resources for the line art of the plants and animals.

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

The following agencies and individuals were contacted during the development of the RMP amendment/environmental assessment.

Federal Agencies

Coast Guard
- Lt. John Healy
- Laurette Tully

Fish and Wildlife Service
- Jane West, Realty Branch, Ft. Snelling
- Doug Spencer, Refuge Manager, Shiawassee NWR

USDA, Forest Service
- James DiMaio, Forest planner, Huron-Manistee NF

State of Michigan Agencies

Dr. Kathryn Eckert, State Historical Preservation Officer

Department of Natural Resources
- Mike Mullen, Ludington State Park

Department of Environmental Quality

Cathy Cunningham, Michigan Coastal Management Program

Other Contacts

David Kopitzke, Wisconsin DNR, Bureau of Endangered Resources

Paul Wegmeier, Alpena County Extension

Dave Neiger, Director, Benzie County Planning Department

Warren Shauer, Delta County Extension

Gary Bardenhagen, Leelanau County Extension

Dave Peterson, Mason County Extension

Tom Kellogg, Northeast Michigan Council of Governments

Private Groups

Kirk Lindquist, Big Sable Point Lighthouse Keepers Association

John T. Griffith, North Woods Conservancy

Dick Moehl, Great Lakes Lighthouse Keepers Association

Thomas M. Woidwode, State Director
The Nature Conservancy, Michigan Chapter

Brian Price, Leelanau Conservancy

Grand Traverse Lighthouse Foundation

Individuals

Dr. Ed Mahoney, MSU Department of Park, Recreation and Tourism Resources, East Lansing

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Prepared by: _____ _____

Planning and Environmental Coordinator — Date

REVIEW

I have reviewed this environmental assessment and find that it is technically adequate and consideration has been given to all resource values.

_____ _____

District Manager — Date

DECISION RECORD/RATIONALE
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Decision: It is my decision that the parcel of public land described above in the Proposed Action section be transferred out of BLM ownership to the government agencies and non-profit organizations identified on Table 2, Michigan Public Domain Lands Transfer Matrix, pending site-specific review.

Finding of No Significant Impact: Based on the analysis of the potential environmental impacts contained in the attached environmental assessment, I have determined that impacts are not expected to be significant. This decision will not affect any significant national resources; nor will the cumulative impacts of this proposal, in combination with other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future actions, result in significant impacts. Therefore, I have concluded that an environmental impact statement is not required.

Rationale: The decision to allow the proposed action does not result in any undue or unnecessary environmental degradation and is conformance with all applicable laws, programs and policies.

_____ _____

District Manager Date

Appendix 1
BLM Revocation Restoration Process under 43 CFR 2371

Agencies holding withdrawn lands must first file a NOI in letter form to relinquish their authority over the lands. The notice must include a legal description and acreage of the land, descriptions of improvements, and the extent to which the lands or resources have been disturbed or changed in character. It must include a description of easements or other rights and privileges that the holding agency has granted in the lands. It also must include information about other agency interests and recommended terms and conditions for further disposition of the lands to protect the public interest. These procedures can be found in BLM Manual Section 2372.

Appendix 2
Properties Listed on the National Register of Historic Places

Big Sable Lighthouse, Mason County—built 1867

Grand Traverse (Cat's Head Point) Lighthouse, Leelanau County—built 1852

Manitou Island Lighthouse, Keweenaw County—built 1850*

Point Betsie, Benzie County—built 1868

Thunder Bay Island Lighthouse, Alpena County—built 1832

Lighthouse Properties that may be Eligible for Listing in the National Register of Historic Places (per Michigan SHPO, March 20, 1996)

Manitou Island, Keweenaw County**

Passage Island Lighthouse, Keweenaw County—1882

Poverty Island Lighthouse, Delta County—1874

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* The Manitou Island lighthouse is one of the two oldest skeletal towers on the Great Lakes. Manitou played an important role in the growth of the Michigan copper industry.

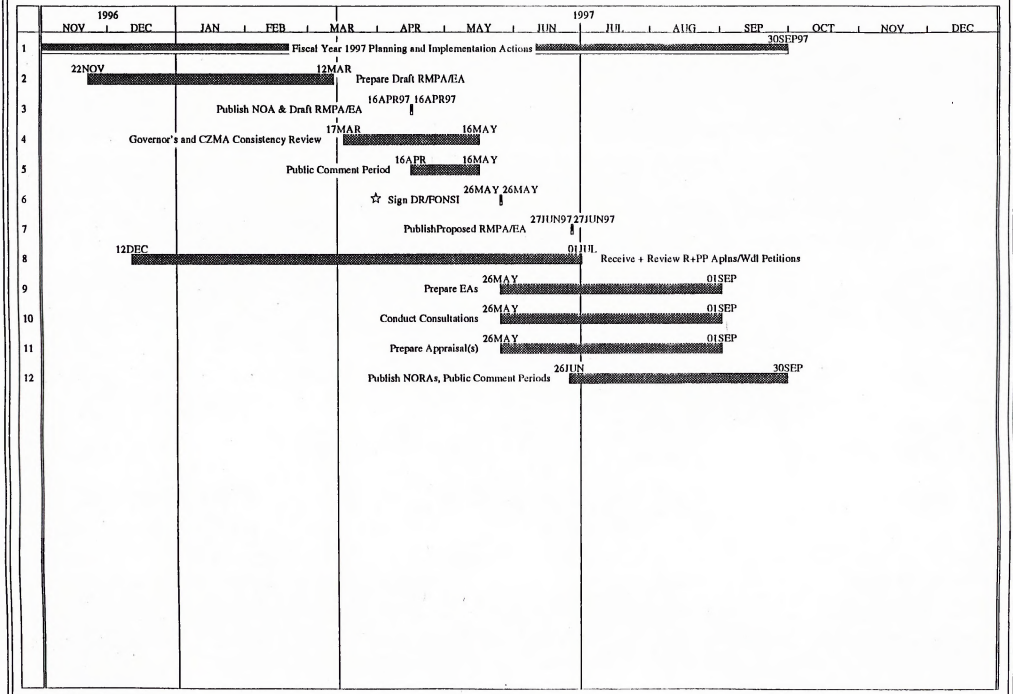
** The island may be NRHP eligible for its role in navigation history and for its historic and prehistoric archaeological values.

Appendix 3: Implementation Plan

After this plan amendment is approved BLM will prepare individual environmental assessments for each of the relinquished parcels. These EAs will analyze the site-specific impacts of transferring the lands and lighthouses out of BLM ownership. If, during development of the EAs, it is determined that transfer would not conform to the intent of this plan (e.g., protection of the historic properties or other resources), BLM may retain the property(ies). At that time, BLM may choose to manage the sites under the direction of Michigan RMP (custodial management) or undertake activity-level planning to determine how best to protect the resources.

Subject to staffing levels, budgetary considerations, or unforeseen events, the schedule for transferring the parcels follows on the next page.

Michigan RMPA I[illegible]mentation Plan



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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Milwaukee District Office
310 West Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 450
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53203

In Reply Refer To:
030:HL
1610

FEB 6 1997

Memorandum

To: State Director (ES-930)

From: District Manager, Milwaukee

Subject: Transmittal of Draft Michigan Resource Management Plan Amendment/Environmental Assessment for Policy Review

Attached is the Michigan Draft RMP Amendment for a policy review. This request is to ensure that this amendment conforms to policies and guidelines as presently written and understood by ESO. In sum, the RMP Amendment:

- Addresses the two issues raised in scoping, which are long-term management of lighthouses and surrounding lands and protection of the historic structures;
- Proposes to transfer the USCG parcels to other Federal, State and local government agencies and non-profit organizations using four disposal criteria;
- Describes generally how the historic structures and lands will be managed and by whom;
- Provides a legal description for each tract;
- Analyzes environmental impacts in general terms; and
- Describes future coordination and consultation activities required by the ESA, NHPA, and AIRFA, and CERCLA clearances.

After completion of this internal review, MDO will:

- Incorporate the substantive policy comments and prepare the draft RMPA for the Governor's and Coastal Zone Management Act consistency reviews;
- Distribute copies to interested publics on the plan's mailing list;
- Complete RMPA/EA and Finding of No Significant Impact; and

- Implement the plan by preparing site-specific EAs, public land orders and other transfer documents.

We believe the process developed for Michigan will be appropriate for other lighthouse tracts in Wisconsin. If the approach used for Michigan is well-received, we will initiate the Wisconsin RMP Amendment in the spring or summer. I appreciate the work that members of your staff have already completed on this project, especially Ed Ruda, and look forward to working with you in the future to quickly finalize the plan.

I would appreciate receiving the State Office's comments by February 21, 1997. If you have any questions, please call me at (414) 297-4450 or Howard Levine at (414) 297-4463.

Attachment
Draft Michigan RMPA/EA

030:HLevine:sw:2/5/97:MI_rmpa_transmittal_es